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Joint Committee on Taxation
October 22, 1991
JCX-24-91

COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

TECHNICAL RECONSIDERATION OF

H.R. 534
(RECREATIONAL BOAT USER FEE RELIEF ACT)

I. Background

On October 16, 1991, the Committee on Ways and Means ("Ways and Means") ordered reported H.R. 534, which had been sequentially referred to it following action by the Committee on Merchant Marine and Fisheries. That sequential referral has been extended through October 22, 1991, to allow Ways and Means to make a technical modification to its prior action.

H.R. 534, as ordered reported by Ways and Means, repeals the recreational boat user fee imposed by the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1990, effective October 1, 1992, subject to an anti-sequester provision. Full repeal of the fee is contingent on sufficient offsetting revenues being raised by a newly imposed access fee to an Automated Tariff Filing and Information System (the "ATFI system") being developed by the Federal Maritime Commission (the "FMC access fee"). As ordered reported by Ways and Means, the FMC access fee would be effective on October 1, 1992.

A complete description of present law, the applicable legislative background, and the provisions approved by Ways and Means on October 16, 1991, is attached. (JCX-21-91)

II. Technical Issue for Consideration

Subsequent to the Ways and Means action, the Congressional Budget Office informed Ways and Means that the bill, as ordered reported, would generate an increase in direct spending in FY 1992, thereby threatening a pay-as-you-go sequester. The source of the increased direct spending is a $4 million repayable advance to be made to the FMC to defray start-up costs associated with the ATFI system. The prior Ways and Means action provided for no new revenues until FY 1993 (i.e., the FMC access fee was to be effective on October 1, 1992).

III. Possible Option

Advance the effective date of the FMC access fee from October 1, 1992, to July 1, 1992, to offset the effect of the $4 million repayable advance to the FMC and to protect against a possible sequester.

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